

## MERCATOR:

OR,

## Commerce Retrieved,

BEING

CONSIDERATIONS on the State of the *British* Trade, &c.

From Saturday, March 6. to Tuesday, March 9. 1713.

*The true Causes of the Encrease of the Portugal Trade enquired into and distinguish'd.**The Treaty of Commerce between England and Portugal, Anno 1703. No part of the Occasion of the Encrease of the Trade to Portugal.**The true Reason of the Encrease of the Trade to the Brasils, and some Account of that Encrease.**A Draught of the Importation of Wine from Portugal to England for four Years before, and four Years after the Treaty, by which it appears our Trade FROM Portugal is not Encreased by the Treaty any more than our Trade TO Portugal.*

**T**HE last *MERCATOR* has stated the Dimensions of the Trade to Portugal for some Years after the making our late Treaty with that King; it is hoped, we shall hear no more of our getting a Million a Year by that Trade.

But the *MERCATOR* comes now to enquire into the Causes of the Encrease of the Portugal Trade, that our People may be undeceiv'd in that gross Suggestion, that the Encrease of the Portugal Trade is owing to the Treaty.

To clear up this Difficulty, We need no more than to examine, whether the Trade to Portugal has not been an Encreasing Trade for several Years before this Treaty, and what the real Causes of that Encrease have been; whether those Causes continuing that Trade has not continu'd to Encrease every Year, and does still Encrease, as much as it did any Year since the said Treaty?

The Encrease of the Trade from Portugal to the Brasils has been such for above Twenty four Years past, and is so well known to all the Merchandizing part of the World, that nothing need be said to it but this, That it is supposed at this time to be Encreased to about twenty times as much, as it was before that time. This Encrease has been occasion'd by the New Discovery of such inexhaustible Mines of Gold, as are become the World's Wonder; a Treasure, which if it did not fall into the Hands of the feeblest and most impotent Nation, as to ambitious Designs in Europe, might have been fatal to all Europe.

The Consequence of this Discovery of Wealth has been the Encrease of People in the Brasils in a prodigious Manner, the Enriching all those People, and their changing their Way of living, from a Mean to a Splendid and Liberal Equipage and Expence, even to Profusion. This has made their Demands of all kinds of European Goods for their own Consumption encrease so wonderfully, and the vast Return of Money in Specie has even enrich'd the whole Nation of Portuguese in Europe, which has also encreased the Demand of Manufactures for their Home-Consumption as well, and for the same Reason, as it has done in the

Brasils, the Wealth and the Luxury of any Nation always encreasing together.

This Encrease has been so prodigious, that whereas about Twenty four or Twenty five Years ago they brought very little, if any Gold from the Brasils. The last Fleet, which came from thence, if Fame lye not, and if the printed Accounts publish'd here, and all agreeing with one another may be credited, brought home above Ten Millions Sterling in Gold, besides 24000 Chests of Sugar, 31000 great Rolls of Tobacco, 61000 Hides, and such other Goods, as that Country produces.

Nor is this all, but we have a New Account by the last Fleet, of more Mines of Gold discovered in the Brasils, for which the Discoverers offer to give the King 700000 l. Sterling, per Annum, clear of all Charges for the King's Part only; if this be true, it is not very likely that those People, who have made this Discovery, will encrease in Wealth and in Number, and make, as it were, a new Nation in that part of the Country, where the Treasure lies; for it seems it is very remote from the rest, and it is not very reasonable to expect, that upon such an Encrease they will also send for all manner of European Goods and Manufactures for their Convenience, Necessity and Pleasure, and so this Trade will still encrease prodigiously, and perhaps be made, as it really bids fair to be, the greatest and the best Trade in the World.

As this Trade to the Brasils has been encreased, so in Proportion has our Share in the Trade to Portugal encreased; and it would not be very hard to state a Proportion between them; and to show that gradually as the Number of Ships going yearly from Portugal to Brasil have encreased, so by a like Gradation, the Trade from this Nation to Portugal has encreased, which would be a farther Evidence, that this has been the true Cause of the Encrease of that Trade.

But what Relation has all this to the little nameless Affair; for compared to these Things, it is not to be nam'd, (viz.) the Clause of the Wine-Trade, what Share in this prodigious Encrease can this Trifle, comparatively speaking, pretend to? And how unfairly do those People act, who would remove Consequences from





from their Causes, and appropriate that to the Treaty about the Wine-duty, which has nothing at all to do with it, and between which there is such a prodigious Disparity, that one is no more to the other, than a little Brook to an Arm of the Sea.

But to make this yet appear more unreasonable, the *MERCATOR* asks another Question. The Treaty of Commerce with Portugal was made in the Year 1703. Let them tell us, whether the Quantity of Wines, which are Imported from Portugal to England, have encreased since that time or not? if they are, then likewise some Encrease may be supposed to have been made by that Treaty in our Exportations thither.

But, on the other Hand, if we took off as many Wines from them before the Treaty as ever we have done since, upon what Foundation will these Men pretend, that our Trade has been Encreased by that Treaty?

The *MERCATOR* thinks he cannot easily be mistaken here, yet to avoid it, he repeats his Argument briefly thus:

The Portugal Trade is Encreased in a very wonderful manner, but not in the least by the Occasion of this Treaty, but by the other Causes mentioned above.

That we took as many Wines from Portugal before the Treaty, as ever we have done since, will appear from the Exportations of every respective Year, for several Years together, both before and after the Treaty, as it is taken out of the Custom-house; and which is as follows:

*An ACCOUNT of Wine Imported from Portugal for Four Years before the Treaty with Portugal, and Four Years after, exclusive of the Year, when the Treaty was made, from the Years 1699 to the Year 1707, excluding the Year 1703.*

	Port London.	Out-Port.	Total.
1699	8017 Ton	686	8703
1700	6584	1703	8287
1701	6372	1036	7408
1702	5069	857	6926
1703	7425	1842	4267 not Reckoned
1704	8164	1763	9927
1705	6006	2444	8450
1706	3094	1543	4637
1707	7072	1936	9008
			32022

So that the Quantity of Wines for the Four Years immediately before the Treaty, and for Four Years immediately after the Treaty, stood thus:

For the Four Years before	—	31324 Ton.
For the Four Years after	—	32022 Ton.
Encrease after the Treaty	—	698 Ton.

Whoever gives himself leave to read over this Scheme, will see the Treaty had no manner of Influence on the

Wine Trade; the Truth is, it was not adapted to influence it at all, for it was no stipulation for any new thing, but for Confirming and Continuing, what was then in Practice: So that to say the Treaty altered the Case one way or other in their Wine Trade, was to say nothing; the Quantity was rather less since that Treaty than it was before it, if we would take in more Years.

As it influenced our Importation, of their Wine nothing at all, so neither could the Wine Trade produce any greater Demand of our Goods among them.

All that can be alledg'd, is the Addition we obtain'd by having our Woollen Cloths admitted into Portugal; and tho' this was considerable in itself, had not the Quantity of other Goods we sent in the room of those Woollen Cloths, sunk in proportion; but as that was our Case, and which the *MERCATOR*, No. 119. has effectually proved, the opening that Article of Woollen Cloths, tho' it was an *Advantage* IN the Trade, yet was really no *Encrease* OF the Trade, the Value Exported being as great before, as it was after; as appears by the Account of those Years from the Custom-house given in the said *MERCATOR*, No. 119.

So that here is very little to be boasted of as an Addition to the Trade, of which we can say, that the Treaty is the Cause of it; for we have nothing to do here with any other Encrease than that. If then the Opposers would be faithful and be fair, and place the Improvements, which are Consequences in the Trade, to the proper Causes, and distinguish them Rightly and Honestly, People would soon come to a right Understanding in the Case, and the Merits of the Treaty would stand by themselves, as the Merits of the Trade would also; and we should know One from the Other.

But we are not to hope for any thing so Honest, as things go now; for when People are distressed for Matter, and in want of clear Evidences, they must either make use of such Shifts and Shams, as they can invent, or else their Cause would fall to the ground, which at this time would be an irretrievable Blow to their other Designs. And as this is a time, when every Twig is to be laid hold of to keep the Humours from sinking, it can be no wonder, that such Absurdities and false Stories are obtruded upon Mankind.

The *MERCATOR* has but One thing to desire of those People, who are persuaded to believe the vast Advantages accruing to the Portugal Trade, and thro' that to the Nation, by this Treaty; and this is, that they would learn to distinguish between what are the Effects of the Treaty, and what are not; and let not a Sett of Enraged People, who are in alarm about the Portugal Trade, just as the Silver-Smiths of Diana were, because their Craft was in danger, persuade them, that the Publick Good is concern'd in it more than really it is.

The Portugal Merchants are a Branch of our Body of Traders, but they are not the whole; and if they will push the private Gain of their own Trade, as if the whole Nation depended upon them, it is time the whole Nation were told, what they drive at, and let to see, that there are other Branches to be taken care of, as well as these.